



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

DENISE W. MERRILL  
HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

TO: Chairman Staples, Chairman Daily and Members of the Finance Committee  
FROM: Rep. Denise Merrill, House Majority Leader  
DATE: March 22, 2010  
RE: Raised Bill 5534: AA Establishing a Revenue Accountability Commission

Thank you so much for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of Raised Bill 5534, An Act Establishing a Revenue Accountability Commission.

The health of our economy is cyclical. And, although this 'great recession' will not last forever, the actions we take in setting policy will have long term implications on our state's fiscal health. Roughly eighteen months ago the state's revenue plummeted, and now, here we are continuing to struggle with what actions to take.

In times like these we need to take a step back, and see the whole picture in order to pave the way for a strong position once the economy recovers. Unfortunately, Connecticut is ill-equipped to do just that because we lack a comprehensive evaluation of our tax policy.

This bill would create a tax commission to evaluate the state's revenue structure and make recommendations based on equity, effectiveness, efficiency, competitiveness. It would be bi-partisan, comprised of members from different sectors of the economy, agencies, and committees. It would consider both personal and businesses taxes, contrast the tax structures of this state with others, employ economic forecasting, and require an open and transparent process of its assessments.

There are frequent requests that come before the legislature to make one change or another in our tax policies. But without seeing those ideas within the context of our whole tax policy how can we truly evaluate their positive or negative impact? By creating this commission we will be able to do just that and to implement a results based accountability process that measures the performance of these policies.

Thank you for your consideration.